

ing an important city. There is surely nothing extravagant in such a calculation. It would be strange, indeed, if the town did not experience rapid growth.

Miners of experience and sound judgment unhesitatingly declare that no place in the west ever had better prospects of becoming a great mining center than Colville. There is not yet a single well-developed mining property in the district, yet the prospect holes from which ores have been taken unmistakably indicate the character of the mines of the region. The only thing needed to bring out the results that must flow from the rock-ribbed hills is capital. If the claim owners without capital could dig their ore and send it a hundred miles by team, thence east by rail for smelting, and still realize a profit from the surface rock (which they did), there must exist a basis for immense mining business with proper development when the smelter and railroad are at their door, as at present.

The gratifying success met by prospectors attracted the attention of such mining experts as Geo. G. Vivian, "Bonanza" Mackey and Senator Jones, of Nevada, and in 1887 the Mutual Smelting & Refining Co. was organized at Colville and the construction of a smelter begun. The lack of capital among the prospectors and consequent lack of development of the mines, and the disinclination of the claim holders to part with their property limited the ore output very materially and the smelter was not put in operation until recently. But the advent of the railroad has brought the country into closer relation with the financial world and the result is already being felt in increased activity in the mines. There are 1,500 tons of ore now on the dump at the smelter awaiting treatment, and 2,500 tons are in course of delivery from the mines. On the first of May the smelter will start on a basis for regular operation. Its present capacity is forty tons per day, but it can easily be made to handle twice that quantity when the available supply of ore shall warrant it. The product of the smelter is bullion bars, which are shipped to Newark, N. J., for refining. Butte, Montana, has the next nearest smelter. The ores of the Colville district include their own fluxes; that is, there is plenty of fluxing ore in the district to properly smelt them. The coke has to be shipped in, but that is much less expensive than shipping the ores out for treatment. Major Moore, general manager of the smelter company, gives some figures that are interesting in connection with smelting Colville ores at different points, and the resulting profit to the miner. He states that ore assaying fifty ounces of silver and forty per cent. lead would yield the miner \$35.27 if sent to Omaha for treatment, \$39.27 in Helena, and \$45.38 if treated in Colville. The Colville smelter buys the ore from the miners deliv-

ered at its dump and pays the cash for it. The company treats and markets its own material entirely independent of the miners.

There are extensive ledges of granite, marble, limestone and slate of superior quality near Colville, and a company has just been organized to develop these quarries. The marble has been tested in the east and is found not to be surpassed anywhere. It is especially valuable for building purposes. The proximity of such building stones will enable Colville to build beautiful and substantial structures at a comparatively small cost.

Important and promising as is the mineral wealth of the Colville district, the agricultural capabilities of the country are of no less moment. From the first, of course, farming was carried on to a greater or less extent, but the remoteness from good markets prevented cultivation of the soil on a large scale. While the military post was maintained there was a limited market at the post. With the departure of the troops went the market. But the Colville valley has long been a famous hay producer, and it bids fair to become as famous a producer of vegetables and fruits. The deep, moist alluvium is particularly suited to growing grasses and vegetables. The adjoining uplands are better suited to grain growing, and now that there is transportation for the product the attention of the ranchers is being directed in that channel. The valley proper of the Colville, with the shelving foot hills on either side, extending down to the Columbia where it unites with a broad area of equally fertile soil on the banks of that great river, presents fine opportunities for diversified agriculture. All this lies directly at Colville's door. On the Columbia is an excellent fruit country. Over the hills to the east of Colville is the Clarke's Fork, or Pend d'Oreille, valley, which is larger than the Colville, and its most direct outlet is by way of the latter.

Nearly everywhere in that country the hills bear a moderate growth of pine, fir, tamarack, etc. The timber makes the best of lumber, and saw mills are being erected to supply the demand for building material.

There are directly tributary to Colville the Colville Indian reservation, on the opposite side of the Columbia, a large tract rich in agricultural and mining possibilities; a long stretch of country up and down the Columbia, extending far into British Columbia and including a great deal of excellent stock range as well as grain and fruit land, and precious and base minerals in both quartz and placers; the Clarke's Fork country, with its rich sub-valley, and such mining districts as the Metaline; and, of course, the whole Colville valley and ridges on either side.

The city of Colville itself is an interesting and